

Primakov favours Kurdish accord

PARIS (R) — Soviet Middle East envoy Yevgeny Primakov said Saturday Kurds' autonomy accord with Baghdad. Mr. Primakov told French Wednesday and others should not raise doubts over it for the moment. "It is a legitimate question," he said. "For the moment neither the Kurds nor Saturday proposed complementary United Nations security guarantees to the Kurds they will be safe once they have returned to their cities.

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PSP surrenders ammunition to Syria

BEIRUT (R) — Lebanon's Druze militia surrendered 300 tonnes of ammunition to Syrian troops on Saturday under a government plan to end 16 years of civil war. Security sources said Progressive Socialist Party (PSP) militiamen and Syrian troops loaded shells, missiles, rockets and anti-aircraft ammunition aboard a convoy of 30 Syrian army trucks. The transfer of the ammunition to the Syrians took place at two PSP bases in the villages of An Zhalta and Ben Al Dine, which are in the Druze-held Shouf mountains southeast of Beirut. The PSP, with 10,000 men, is Lebanon's second strongest private army after the Lebanese Forces (LF) militia. The sources said more ammunition would be handed over on Sunday and then PSP would then surrender tanks, multi-barrelled rocket launchers, cannons and heavy artillery to Syrian troops. The militia has been collecting weapons in preparation for their transfer to the Syrians since Thursday. The PSP has denied reports that some heavy guns had already been handed over. The government of President Elias Hrawi last month ordered all Lebanese and foreign militias in Lebanon to hand their weapons to the Lebanese army by the end of April.

Two killed in occupied territories

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM (AP) — Unknown assailants killed an Arab youth and a man suspected of collaborating with the Israeli authorities, reports said Saturday. In the occupied Gaza Strip, 25-year-old Ali Mahmoud Badwan was kidnapped from his house in the Bureij refugee camp before dawn Saturday. Then shot him to death in a nearby orchard, the reports said. In the occupied West Bank, authorities on Saturday found the body of 25-year-old Ahmad Hamdan, who was stabbed to death in an olive grove not far from the village of Balata, where he lived. Journalists said the boy was kidnapped by masked men Thursday.

Arabs urged to keep boycott of Israel

DAMASCUS (R) — A senior Arab League official on Saturday urged Arab states to pursue a boycott of companies doing business with Israel. "The boycott of Israel is an effective weapon to limit Israel's greed and Israel's repression of our people in Palestine and their uprising..." said Zuhair Aqel, commissioner of the Arab Office for the Boycott of Israel. "We call for commitment to the boycott rules to counter the Israeli obstinacy," he added in a speech at the opening session of a week-long meeting of the office in the Syrian capital.

Pakistan will not dump nuclear programme

ISLAMABAD (R) — Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif said Saturday that Pakistan would not give up its nuclear research programme even if it had to suffer hardships through loss of foreign aid. The official APP news agency quoted as telling a rally in the northwestern town of Bannu that "foreign quarters" were accusing Pakistan of making an atomic bomb, despite its assurances that its nuclear programme is peaceful. "They desire that we forge or bargain on our peaceful nuclear programme which we shall never do," Mr. Sharif said. He was apparently referring to the United States, which cut off all military and economic aid to Islamabad last October under Pressler amendment legislation, after President George Bush refused to certify to Congress that Islamabad was not making a bomb.

Yeltsin nominated for Russian presidency

MOSCOW (AP) — Democratic Russia, a coalition of reformers and political parties, nominated Boris Yeltsin as its candidate Saturday for expected June elections for president of the Russian Republic, TASS reported. Democratic Russia, an anti-Communist organisation, claims 1.3 million members. Mr. Yeltsin currently is chairman of the legislature, now the highest office in Russia. Russians voted by an overwhelming margin in March to create a presidency filled by popular vote. The election must still be approved by the Russian congress in May. Mr. Yeltsin is widely expected to win the election, which would give him popularly-backed authority in Russia, which is the largest of the 15 Soviet republics with half the population and three-quarters of the land. Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev, in contrast, has never faced the voters.

Fez rioters jailed up to ten years

RABAT (R) — A court in the central Moroccan city of Fez has sentenced 42 people to between four months and 10 years in prison for their part in violent riots last December 14. A group of 48 appeared in the Fez appeal court charged with setting fire to public buildings, damaging cars and shops and participating in the riots. Two were sentenced to 10 years and 40 to prison terms ranging from eight years to four months. Six were acquitted.

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Jordan expects major Soviet role in efforts for peace in Mideast

AMMAN (J.T.) — Foreign Minister Tamer Masri Saturday welcomed a forthcoming visit by Soviet Foreign Minister Alexander Bessmertnykh to the Middle East and said that Jordan expected an active Soviet role in current peace efforts in the region.

Speaking on Jordan Radio Mr. Masri said the outcome of U.S. Secretary of State James Baker's mission depended on Israeli response to the peace efforts.

"Jordan welcomes the forthcoming visit of Mr. Bessmertnykh and we expect a great deal of his mission," Mr. Masri told Jordan radio in an interview.

"The Soviet Union can play an important role... and it has plenty of cards to play," he said.

Had Moscow's position on a settlement of the Arab-Israeli conflict is "close to that of the Arabs and its understanding of a regional settlement is based on Israeli withdrawal from Arab territories."

"Moscow shares with us the principles of exchanging land for peace as well as opposing Israel's cancerous settlement in Arab land," Mr. Masri added.

"We expect a lot from the

Soviet Union," Mr. Masri said. "It has many cards which it can use."

He said Moscow opposed Israel's policy of building settlements on the occupied Arab territories and understood that using U.N. Resolution 242 as the base for any peace talks meant Israel exchanging land for peace.

Mr. Bessmertnykh is due to begin a Middle East tour soon. Earlier this week he told Mr. Baker that Moscow would co-sponsor talks between Israel and the Arabs and Israel and the Palestinians within the framework of a regional peace conference.

No date is yet fixed for his trip but Israel expects Moscow first to renew diplomatic ties with the Jewish state.

Mr. Baker broke off his tour of the region, during talks in Israel Friday when he heard that his mother had died.

State department spokeswoman Margaret Tutwiler said on Saturday Mr. Baker seemed to be putting the burden of salvaging his peace mission on Israel and still needed some answers on crucial questions he put to Israeli leaders.

Mr. Baker has been trying to

persuade Israel, the Palestinians and Arab states to attend a peace conference which would serve as a vehicle for direct talks between all the parties.

Mr. Masri said that perhaps Mr. Baker had achieved a slight progress through his tour and in the Arab countries, but it seems that he was less fortunate in his talks with Israeli government leaders.

Mr. Baker would perhaps have to return to this region more than once so that he can obtain further replies from Israel, Mr. Masri said.

Mr. Bessmertnykh's visit to Israel is the first by a Soviet foreign minister since 1967, when Moscow severed relations with Israel.

Mr. Masri did not comment on the development of the Soviet-Israeli relations.

Mr. Baker praised Mr. Baker's regional mission and said: "This is the first time that Washington is genuinely seeking to resolve the complicated Arab-Israeli conflict."

The minister refused to say whether he was optimistic by the outcome of Mr. Baker's peace mission adding that the "ball is now in Israeli court."



Aziz demands West get out of Iraqi affairs

ALGIERS (AP) — Iraqi Deputy Prime Minister Tamer Aziz said Saturday that friction with Iraq's Kurdish minority could be eased if the United States and its allies stop meddling in Iraq's internal affairs.

"There exists the possibility of a solution to the Kurdish question, on the condition that the Americans and the West stop intervening in internal Iraqi affairs," Mr. Aziz said.

Mr. Aziz made his comments on arriving in Algeria early Saturday from Rabat, Morocco. He was greeted by Algerian Foreign Minister Sid Ahmad Ghazali.

"We are able to solve the Kurdish question and will solve it, notably after the accord with the Kurdish leaders who expressed their disagreement with Western actions vis-a-vis the Kurdish refugees," Mr. Aziz said in Algiers.

"The West has amplified the Kurdish question and immersed itself in the internal affairs of Iraq, violating its sovereignty in an attempt at destabilisation," he said.

Hundreds of thousands of Kurds fled their homes for the mountains of northern Iraq, Turkey and Iran after their post-Gulf war rebellion.

The United States, Britain and France have established zones in northern Iraq to entice the Kurds to return home.

Iraqi President Saddam Hussein and Kurdish leader Jalal Talabani agreed earlier this week that the Kurdish regions of northern Iraq can enjoy autonomy under a 1970 accord.

"We worked and will continue to work for the benefit of our people and the people of the region. We are countries who

have full freedom in adopting their decisions..." said Mr. Aziz.

"We sought to utilise this freedom which we possess for the benefit of our people in Iran and Syria and all Arab and Islamic peoples..."

Mr. Aziz visited Saudi Arabia on Friday for the first time since the restoration of diplomatic ties last month and said both agreed to work together for regional security.

Syria, Egypt and the Saudi-led Gulf Cooperation Council signed a security and economic cooperation agreement in Damascus in March, which was criticised by Tehran.

Iran says it should be included in any agreement.

Diplomats said Syria played a major role in improving post-Gulf-war ties between Iran and Gulf states and this paved the way for Saudi pledges to include Iran in security arrangements.

Iran's official Islamic Republic News Agency (IRNA) said the king pledged to help initiate a campaign in Saudi Arabia to raise money for the over million Kurdish refugees in Iran.

"Rather our view was that if not settled, the negotiations must start from the beginning," Mr. Nabavi told IRNA in an interview.

"Due to problems in its execution, if we reached no agreement under the Carter administration it was not clear if we would have been able to have fresh negotiations with the Reagan administration," he added.

"As the two leading countries in the 'Persian' Gulf, Iran and Saudi Arabia have decided to maintain close, strategic, and comprehensive cooperation on ensuring regional security," Mr. Velayati said in remarks broadcast on Tehran Radio.

Mr. Velayati said regional security without Iran's participation would be meaningless.

"We consider regional cooperation to be the basis for regional security, and so far the regional countries have not only not disagreed with this, but we believe they are all serious about achieving this."

King stresses need for continued cohesion, respect for opinions

AMMAN (Petra) — His Majesty King Hussein called Saturday for maintaining the cohesion and for more awareness among Jordanian people of the conditions through which the Arab Nation is passing.

In a Cabinet meeting he chaired, King Hussein expressed his confidence that the domestic process in the Kingdom would be enhanced through deepening public participation in shouldering responsibilities and respecting public freedom and each other's opinions as well as human rights.

King Hussein called for stepping up dialogue between the various schools of thought in Jordan in the same spirit which prevailed during the discussions

which should be dealt with on this basis, the King said.

King Hussein affirmed that Jordan will shoulder its full responsibility in accordance with its principles in working on ensuring that the Palestinian people will secure their legitimate right and their land in the way they accept.

"To achieve this end, Jordan will continue Arab, Islamic and internal contacts to push forward the wheel of a just and lasting peace based on international legitimacy and commitment to the constant rights of the Palestinian people," the King said.

The King lauded the Cabinet's efforts in tackling problems facing citizens.

The Cabinet meeting was attended by Prime Minister Muad Adayan and Royal Court Chief Sharif Zeid Ben Shaker.

Baker puts onus for peace on Israel; Arens, Levy feud

Combined agency dispatches

U.S. SECRETARY OF STATE James Baker, ending his third Middle East tour since the Gulf war, now seems to be putting the burden of salvaging his peace mission on Israel.

"We still need some answers from the Israeli government... before we can move this process forward," said State Department spokeswoman Margaret Tutwiler.

Mr. Baker told reporters on Saturday that friction with Iraq's Kurdish minority could be eased if the United States and its allies stop meddling in Iraq's internal affairs.

"There exists the possibility of a solution to the Kurdish question, on the condition that the Americans and the West stop intervening in internal Iraqi affairs," Mr. Aziz said.

Mr. Aziz made his comments on arriving in Algeria early Saturday from Rabat, Morocco. He was greeted by Algerian Foreign Minister Sid Ahmad Ghazali.

"We are able to solve the Kurdish question and will solve it, notably after the accord with the Kurdish leaders who expressed their disagreement with Western actions vis-a-vis the Kurdish refugees," Mr. Aziz said in Algiers.

"The West has amplified the Kurdish question and immersed itself in the internal affairs of Iraq, violating its sovereignty in an attempt at destabilisation," he said.

Officials and diplomats said the talks would cover issues related to post-Gulf war security in the region, the plight of Western hostages held in Lebanon and ways of cementing ties.

Mr. Aziz, who was accorded a full ceremonial welcome by Mr. Aziz, told reporters: "There are many issues in our region and matters dealing with our neighbours which we will discuss," in an apparent reference to Iraq.

Mr. Aziz, who visited Iran in September, said there were many important issues which needed discussion following the Gulf war.

"We worked and will continue to work for the benefit of our people and the people of the region. We are countries who

have full freedom in adopting their decisions..." said Mr. Aziz.

"We sought to utilise this freedom which we possess for the benefit of our people in Iran and Syria and all Arab and Islamic peoples..."

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"Due to problems in its execution, if we reached no agreement under the Carter administration it was not clear if we would have been able to have fresh negotiations with the Reagan administration," he added.

"As the two leading countries in the 'Persian' Gulf, Iran and Saudi Arabia have decided to maintain close, strategic, and comprehensive cooperation on ensuring regional security," Mr. Velayati said in remarks broadcast on Tehran Radio.

Mr. Velayati said regional security without Iran's participation would be meaningless.

"We consider regional cooperation to be the basis for regional security, and so far the regional countries have not only not disagreed with this, but we believe they are all serious about achieving this."

Velayati sees new era in ties with Saudis

JEDDAH (Agencies) — Iranian Foreign Minister Ali Akbar Velayati said before leaving Saturday that relations between the kingdom and the Islamic Republic had entered a new era, with the Saudi monarch expressing interest in visiting Iran.

"A new page has opened up in relations between Iraq and Saudi Arabia," Mr. Velayati was quoted as saying by the official Saudi Press Agency (SPA). The foreign minister's two-day visit put the seal on ties renewed last month after a four-year estrangement.

Mr. Velayati spoke after his late night Friday meeting with King Fahd and the talks he held with Saudi Foreign Minister Prince Saud Al Faisal.

Mr. Velayati flew to Damascus to join Iranian President Hashemi Rafsanjani on an official visit there.

Iran's official Islamic Republic News Agency (IRNA) said the king pledged to help initiate a campaign in Saudi Arabia to raise money for the over million Kurdish refugees in Iran.

King Fahd also expressed the hope that he could visit Tehran at an "appropriate opportunity."

King Fahd received Mr. Velayati at his Salam Palace in the Red Sea port city of Jeddah following the Iranian delegation's return from the neighbouring holy city of Mecca where Mr. Velayati performed a pilgrimage to Islam's holiest shrines.

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Diplomat denies Karrubi made deal with candidate Reagan

NICOSIA (Agencies) — An Iranian who played a key role in the release of 52 U.S. hostages denied reports that a senior Tehran official struck a deal with Ronald Reagan's election campaign manager to delay their freedom.

In an interview published Saturday in the Moroccan opposition newspaper Al Ittihad Al Achir, Mr. Aziz said Iraq was on the path towards democratic, constitutional government.

"The logic of revolutionary legitimacy must give way to the logic of constitutional legitimacy," the newspaper quoted him as saying.

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150 Somali refugees to go home from Jordan this week

By P.V. Vivekanand
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — Around 150 Somali refugees are expected to be flown from Amman to the northern Somali town of Berbera this week, senior U.N. officials said Saturday.

The 150 represent almost half of the foreign nationals who remain in Jordan seeking asylum in third countries after getting stranded in the Kingdom in the wake of the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait in August.

"We have received landing permission for Berbera and we hope to send the flight out Tuesday," said Janvier De Riedmatten, head of the Jordan mission of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR).

Mr. De Riedmatten stressed that the repatriation was being planned on the explicit, individual request of the Somalis since one of the fundamental principles of UNHCR was never to send any refugee anywhere against his or her will.

With the departure of the group, about 100 Somalis, including families, will remain in Jordan in addition to 66 Iraqis who also have requested UNHCR help to secure political refuge in third countries.

"Some of them are waiting for visas for other countries arranged through relatives and friends and do not want to go back to Somalia right now."

said Ismail Hamdullah, a Somali community leader. "Some others are too sick to travel."

The Somalis are living in accommodation provided by UNHCR, which also supplies them basic food needs. Some of them are in hotels while others are living in rented apartments.

About 150 of the Somalis were living in one of the camps at Azraq which were set up for evacuees from Kuwait and Iraq, and they were moved to Amman when the authorities closed the camps when the flow of evacuees stopped in early March.

"Those who will be leaving this week are mostly of the Ishaq tribe from northern Somalia where the security situation has returned to normal," Mr. Hamdullah said. "Some of the others who remain are from the south and their return home is dependent on the security situation in southern Somalia," he added.

Latest reports from Somalia spoke of intermittent clashes in the south, where rival Somali groups as well as loyalists of the ousted regime of President Mohammad Siad Barre are fighting among each other. The president was ousted in January but pockets of his loyalists remain scattered in the central and southern parts of the country.

In addition to the group from Jordan, another 116

Radical to lead Iranian pilgrims to Mecca

NICOSIA (AP) — Iran's spiritual leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei has appointed a radical former intelligence chief to lead Iranian pilgrims to Saudi Arabia and encouraged him to whip up anti-Western sentiment during the hajj.

Tehran Radio said Ayatollah Khamenei issued a decree appointing Hojatoleslam Mohammad Reysahri as his personal representative to the Hajj.

It said he would supervise the 110,000 Iranian pilgrims taking part in the rituals in the holy cities of Mecca and Medina in June.

The Iranians had boycotted the Hajj over the past three seasons amid a strain in Riyadh-Tehran relations.

During the 1987 rituals, clashes between worshippers and the Saudi police killed 402 people, most of them Iranians, who tried to stage political rallies. The Saudi ban such activities during the pilgrimage season.

The ICRC official said "thousands" of Iraqi PoWs had refused to go home but it was difficult to say exactly how many because the process of registering remaining PoWs was still going

PoW return from S. Arabia delayed, Red Cross says

RIYADH (R) — Thousands of Iraqi prisoners of war (PoWs) have had their return home from Saudi Arabia delayed while Saudi authorities reorganise their camps, the Red Cross said Friday.

A spokesman for the International Red Cross (ICRC) in Riyadh told Reuters the repatriation process stopped last Monday as the remaining 10,000-15,000 prisoners were being transferred to central camps near the kingdom's northern border.

"No further repatriation can take place while the reorganisation process goes on — The (Saoudi) are bringing the prisoners from many scattered camps to a more central location," the spokesman said.

He did not say where the PoWs were being taken but said the process would probably take one week.

Around 75,000 PoWs have been registered and 62,000 have returned home so far. The repatriation process was halted for four days last week due to the Eid Al Fitr holiday, then resumed on Saturday and Sunday when a total of 1,336 PoWs were sent home.

The ICRC official said Hojatoleslam Reysahri served as intelligence minister 1984-1989. He then became prosecutor general. He belongs to the radical clique in the Iranian hierarchy that opposes President Hashemi Rafsanjani's liberal policies and his efforts to bridge ties to the West.

Ayatollah Khamenei, a staunch ally of Mr. Rafsanjani, has often taken steps to appease the radicals and avoid an open confrontation between the two camps.

"The camp of blasphemy and arrogance, led by the tyrannical and hostile regime of America ... occupies anywhere it wishes and plunders the lives and wealth of the Muslims," the radio quoted Ayatollah Khamenei as telling Hojatoleslam Reysahri in the letter of appointment.

The London newspaper quoted unnamed U.S. sources in Diyarbakir, southeast Turkey, as saying that the Kuwaiti squads were torturing and killing Palestinian civilians who disappeared into the hands of Kuwait's own security forces.

"They found substantial evidence of torture, and the U.S. government's own current files list 350 Palestinians still missing and feared dead at the hands of the Kuwaiti authorities."

Mr. Fisk reported Saturday: "American sources here have now revealed that an undercover team of U.S. special forces and specially trained military reservist officers ... were given the task after the liberation of Kuwait of tracking down hundreds of missing Palestinian civilians who disappeared into the hands of Kuwait's own security forces."

The London newspaper quoted unnamed U.S. sources in Diyarbakir, southeast Turkey, as saying that the Kuwaiti squads were torturing and killing Palestinian civilians.

"The camp of blasphemy and arrogance, led by the tyrannical and hostile regime of America ... occupies anywhere it wishes and plunders the lives and wealth of the Muslims," the radio quoted Ayatollah Khamenei as telling Hojatoleslam Reysahri in the letter of appointment.

"Muslims should be encouraged to unite and should be made wary of the enemies' conspiracies," Ayatollah Khamenei said.

He told him to "carry out to the letter all orders" issued by the late founder of the Islamic Republic, Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini, to the previous Haj leaders.

Commenting on the appointment, Mujahedeen-e-Khalq, Iran's main opposition group based in Iraq, said Hojatoleslam Reysahri would go to Saudi Arabia to "carry out the regime's reactionary objectives and export terrorism."

A statement from the Mujahedeen's press office in London said: "For many years, Reysahri has been in charge of one of the regime's terrorist group abroad called 'Organisation of the Islamic Revolution of the Arabian peninsula.'"

The appointment was announced in Tehran while Foreign Minister Ali Akbar Velayati was in Mecca, the birthplace of Prophet Mohammad, performing a pilgrimage after official talks with the Saudi government.

It was his first trip to the kingdom since relations were restored last month, ending a three-year rupture. Part of the talks were devoted to arrangements for the Iranian pilgrims resuming their participation in Haj, one of the main pillars of the Islamic faith.

The human rights group Amnesty International said this month that scores of people have been killed and hundreds arbitrarily held and beaten by security forces and vigilante groups since Kuwait's liberation from Iraqi occupation at the end of February.

U.S. Secretary of State James Baker, who visited Kuwait Tues-

day, said the crown prince acknowledged that abuses occurred in the first days after liberation and now have been stopped.

Mr. Fisk reported Saturday: "American sources here have now revealed that an undercover team of U.S. special forces and specially trained military reservist officers ... were given the task after the liberation of Kuwait of tracking down hundreds of missing Palestinian civilians who disappeared into the hands of Kuwait's own security forces."

"They found substantial evidence of torture, and the U.S. government's own current files list 350 Palestinians still missing and feared dead at the hands of the Kuwaiti authorities."

Mr. Fisk said the U.S. State Department had found out that the Kuwaiti government-in-exile in Saudi Arabia had originally planned to deport all 200,000 of the Palestinians after liberation.

He said that in the days immediately after liberation U.S. special forces originally cooperated with Kuwaiti special forces in sweeps through Palestinian districts of Kuwait City.

Mr. Fisk reported: "According to U.S. sources here, the crown prince ... indignantly denied his family's implication in the atrocities, but after being handed names, dates and other details of the execution squads, he sent his son on a long-term sabbatical outside the emirate."

The human rights group Amnesty International said this month that scores of people have been killed and hundreds arbitrarily held and beaten by security forces and vigilante groups since Kuwait's liberation from Iraqi occupation at the end of February.

"Our campaign in the Gulf was one of a kind and we should not get cocky about our success," said retired General William C. Westmoreland, 77.

Westmoreland, retired Admiral Elmo Zumwalt and retired air force Gen. John Vogt spoke before the House of Representatives Armed Services Defence Policy Subcommittee.

Chairman Les Aspin said the hearing was convened to examine whether the Gulf war was "so unique an event that we face dangers in drawing narrow lessons" over the defeat of Iraqi forces.

MIDDLE NEWS IN BRIEF

State Department denies Glaspie to quit

WASHINGTON (R) — The U.S. State Department Friday denied a report that April Glaspie, the ambassador to Iraq accused of failing to deter Iraq from invading Kuwait, was resigning. Cable News Network reported Thursday that Ms. Glaspie was quitting. "She's not leaving. I talked to her this morning. She does intend to spend a year as a diplomat in residence at a U.S. university. This is a very good follow-on assignment for many returning ambassadors," said State Department spokesman Richard Boucher. Ms. Glaspie came under fire after Iraq released a transcript of a July 25, 1990, meeting with President Saddam Hussein in which she appeared meek in replying to his threats against Kuwait. A week later, Iraq invaded. Ms. Glaspie returned to Washington and for seven months remained silent about what happened. But in March she testified to a congressional committee that she had clearly warned President Saddam that the United States would defend its vital interests.

Equipment, relief supplies sent to Kurds

PARIS (AP) — France sent a mobile water treatment plant and 600 tonnes of food, blankets, tents and medical supplies Friday to aid Kurdish refugees. The water treatment plant, put at the disposition of the government by the Societe Lyonnaise des Eaux, will provide some 20,000 refugees with five litres of drinking water daily. Relief workers say the lack of clean water is the major factor causing the death of about 500 refugees a day. Water-related maladies including diarrhoea and dehydration are taking a heavy toll among children in particular.

Walesa to visit Israel in May

GDANSK, Poland (R) — President Lech Walesa will visit Israel next month, his spokesman said Friday as the Polish leader returned from a four-day state visit to Britain. Spokesman Andrzej Drzyzgowski said the May 20-23 visit would be important for Mr. Walesa, the former Solidarity trade union leader elected state president last December. Israeli Ambassador Miron Gordon said last month that he hoped the visit, the first by a Polish president to the Jewish state, would help to overcome the "problem of anti-Semitism" in Poland.

Pakistan resumes train service with Iran

ISLAMABAD (R) — Pakistan resumed a train service to the eastern Iranian town of Zahidan Friday after a 20-year gap in a move aimed at boosting trade. The Zahidan Express will initially run once a week from the south-western Pakistani town of Quetta but could become a daily service in the future, the PPI news agency quoted Railways Ministry Secretary S.R. Poonagar as saying. The Quetta-Zahidan railway section would transport Iranian imports to Zahidan through the Pakistani port of Karachi as well as exports from Iran by the same route, he said.

American killed in Turkey

ANKARA (AP) — An Iraqi-American died when his car fell off the road into the Zay River near the refugee camps on the Turkey-Iraq border, a car rental company official said here Saturday. The man, who died on Wednesday, was identified as Siham Alcass Toma, 44, an engineer from Chicago, the Hertz company officials said. His wife and other relatives were informed of the death, they added. An official at the hotel where he stayed for two nights here before hiring the car said the man was desperate to go to Cukurca, on the Iraqi border, where about 185,000 Iraqi Kurds have taken refuge.

Kabul says troops kill 400 rebels

ISLAMABAD (R) — The Soviet-backed Afghan authorities said Friday government troops killed 400 rebels and captured their base in the eastern province of Logar. They also seized tanks and rockets from radical guerrilla leader Gulbuddin Hekmatyar's Hezb-i-Islami party base in Logar's Tangi Waghjan region, Kabul Radio said. The broadcast, monitored in the Pakistan capital Islamabad, said a number of Pakistani soldiers helping the rebels were among those killed in the operation which it said began on Monday. No independent confirmation of the report was available. If true, it would be the first significant Kabul victory after rebels seized the eastern garrison town of Khost on March 31. Pakistan denied Afghan charges that its armed forces are helping the rebels.

Suharto to go on pilgrimage this year

JAKARTA (AP) — President Suharto and his family will go on a religious pilgrimage to Saudi Arabia this year, the pro-government daily Suara Karya reported Saturday. Indonesia's leading muslim preacher, Zainuddin M.Z., called an audience of around 60,000 Muslims in the country's northernmost province of Aceh on Thursday to pray for Mr. Suharto's safety during the June pilgrimage, the newspaper said. Government officials have yet to confirm reports of the president's planned trip. But Mohammad Abdur Yaman, an envoy from Saudi Arabia's King Fahd, said earlier this year that Mr. Suharto had accepted a Saudi invitation to make the pilgrimage. Earlier this month, Religious Affairs Minister Munawir Sjazali led a team of parliamentarians and officials from the military, immigration, health and religious affairs ministries on a trip to Saudi Arabia "to prepare for Indonesian pilgrimage."

Mauritanians march to support president

NOUAKCHOTT (R) — Tens of thousands of people marched in Mauritania in support of government plans to permit multi-party democracy, official sources said Saturday. The march on Friday evening was the biggest demonstration ever seen in Nouakchott, capital of this dusty, Sahelian country that is the bridge between black Africa and the Arab north. Soldiers at first tried to contain the demonstration, but later marchers shouting pro-democracy slogans approached to within 250 metres of the presidency. President Maouya Ould Sid'ahmed Taya, Mauritania's military leader, earlier this month promised multi-party elections and a constitutional referendum this year.

ARRIVALS Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights (Terminal 1)

16:15 Jeddah (RJ)
16:55 Doha, Bahrain (RJ)

18:00 New York, Amsterdam (RJ)

18:45 Paris, Geneva (RJ)

18:55 London, Brussels (RJ)

19:00 Madrid, Rome (RJ)

19:15 Frankfurt, Vienna (RJ)

20:00 Larnaca (CY)

20:45 Tripoli (LN)

20:55 Larnaca (CY)

21:00 Tripoli (LN)

21:45 Larnaca (CY)

22:00 Larnaca (CY)

22:15 Larnaca (CY)

22:30 Larnaca (CY)

22:45 Larnaca (CY)

22:55 Larnaca (CY)

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Jordan, Canada discuss assistance

AMMAN (J.T.) — A five-member delegation from the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) has opened talks with officials at the Ministry of Planning to determine the best areas in which Jordanian-Canadian cooperation can be pursued in the light of an earlier agreement to provide Jordan with Canadian economic assistance.

The delegation is led by Susan Laporte, CIDA's director of programmes at the Middle East Bureau, who met Saturday with Minister of Industry and Trade and Acting Minister of Planning Ziyad Fariz to discuss the Canadian said.

Ministry of Planning Secretary General Saifan Touqan told the Jordan News Agency, Petra, the talks covered means of channelling Canada's assistance to the Kingdom to help it carry out the economic restructuring programme in the wake of the Gulf war, which had a negative impact on the Jordanian economy.

Prospects for Jordanian exports to Canada, Canada's contributions to develop the Jordanian agricultural, water, communications, tourism and energy sectors were other topics of importance discussed at the meeting.

Mr. Touqan said that the two sides reviewed Canada's food aid to the Kingdom and means of helping it develop its human resources through Canadian expertise.

First shipment of phosphate to leave Jordan for Iran

AMMAN (J.T.) — The first shipment of Jordanian phosphate for Iran is due to leave the port of Aqaba during this week, according to an announcement by the Jordan Phosphate Mines Company (JPMC).

The announcement said that the company had reached a trade deal with Iran to sell it 250,000 tonnes of phosphatic fertilisers during 1991.

The agreement was reached in February when it was announced that Iran would buy \$66 million worth of Jordanian phosphate during 1991.

The rock will be shipped to Iranian ports in monthly consignments until the whole amount of 250,000 tonnes has been shipped.

Pope sends message of solidarity, sympathy to the Muslim World

AMMAN (J.T.) — His Holiness Pope John Paul II has expressed his sympathy and solidarity with the Muslim World following the end of the Gulf war and on the occasion of Eid Al Fitr feast which was celebrated earlier this month at the end of the holy month of Ramadan.

A press release by the Apostolic delegation in Amman Saturday quoted the Pope as noting in a special message to the Islamic World that he was expressing solidarity, particularly this year, in view of the tragic events of the past month, during the Gulf war, with the people in the Middle

East region.

The Pope's message expressed sympathy and solidarity in particular with those who have lost loved ones. "May this time of mourning be tempered by the awareness that God's mercy and love are without limit," the statement said.

It said: "To all Muslims throughout the world, I wish to express readiness on the part of the Catholic Church to work together with all people of good will to aid the victims of the war and to build a lasting peace in the Middle East."

HOME NEWS IN BRIEF

Cultural week at Yarmouk University

IRBID (Petra) — Under the patronage of Her Majesty Queen Noor Al Hussein, the activities of the cultural week of the Yarmouk University's Faculty of Arts will start Sunday in the campus. The activities of the week will include scientific and cultural seminars and several exhibitions.

Bids for schools building in Balqa

SALT (Petra) — The Balqa Governorate's Education Department will invite bids for constructing school buildings in several areas of the governorate. Department sources said the department's decision to construct these schools comes within the framework of plans to quit rented buildings and abolish the two-shift schools.

Holiday announced

AMMAN (Petra) — All ministries and public departments and institutions will not be working on May 1 in observance of Labour Day, according to a communiqué issued Wednesday by Prime Minister Mudar Badran.

WHAT'S GOING ON

EXHIBITION

* Exhibition of fine handicrafts, weavings, quilts, on Friday, at the Abu Jaber estate-Yadoubeh (open: 10 a.m.-9 p.m.)

* Dried flowers exhibition by Hind Kurdi Nuweirat at the Royal Cultural Centre.

FILM

* Feature film entitled "Fahrenheit" at the American Centre — 7:00 p.m.



Secretary-General at the Ministry of Tourism Nasri Atallah Saturday sees off a group of European tour operators and journalists who visited Jordan's touristic sites for the past week (Petra photo)

Tour operators, journalists leave Jordan with message: The Kingdom is safe for tourists

By Maha Addasi
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — Journalists and tour operators from all over Europe who came to Jordan on an all-expense paid familiarisation trip left Saturday after visiting touristic sites to get acquainted with the touristic sector in the Kingdom and convey the message that the country was safe to visit and had a great deal to offer.

Secretary-General at the Ministry of Tourism Nasri Atallah saw the group off and expressed hope that its visit would initiate cooperation between tourism agencies in Jordan and Europe to facilitate and encourage tourism to Jordan.

After the beginning of the Gulf crisis, on Aug. 2, the level of tourism in Jordan dropped by 100 per cent as many tourists questioned the safety of the region.

In order to boost tourism in Jordan, Ministry of Tourism, Royal Jordanian (RJ), tour agencies and Jordan's major hotels jointly organised and funded the week-long trip.

"The people on this familiarisation trip should go back to their countries and tell of what they saw," Mr. Atallah said. "I wish that those on the trip would mention the fact that it is safe here," he added.

"There was a great deal of negative coverage of the region in France," Sylvie Gollombet a French journalist said. "Now I know that what we saw was exaggerated far too much. It is very safe here," she said.

Some reasons for doubting the safety in the region were

pinpointed by the visitors. "During the war I didn't know whether Jordan would be drawn in so I waited till the war was over before considering to come to Jordan," a British journalist, Susan Raven said. "Now after coming here I know that it is very safe."

According to Mr. Atallah, the purpose of this trip was not only to familiarise the European market with Jordan as a safe centre of tourism, but also to introduce a new programme of tourism in which tourists stay in Amman and visit Jordan's northern parts before embarking to Petra and Aqaba, in the south, where accommodation areas become extremely congested.

"Accommodations are plentiful in Amman," Mr. Atallah said. "So tourists who come to Jordan and visit sites in the north, like Umm Qais, will then come back to Amman and stay at one of its many hotels."

Projects to rebuild archaeological sites are underway in order to attract more tourists.

"The Temple of Hercules in Amman is one of the most important archaeological sites in the Middle East and it lies in central Amman," the person in charge of projects at the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) Tom Daily said. "By rebuilding that temple we will be giving tourists more to see in Amman," he added.

Mr. Daily said that USAID had committed \$600,000 for this project. The team working at the reconstruction of the

temple have started their second season of reconstruction on Saturday.

But no matter how many attractions are rebuilt in Amman, many tourists come to Jordan to immediately flock to the south, to Petra, without staying in Amman.

"I enjoyed seeing the northern parts of Jordan, but it is Petra that would be the reason for me to come back," Gerry Gyngell, the administrative manager of a tour agency in London said.

That explains the approach people take when they plan to tour Jordan. "People hear so much about Petra before they come to Jordan that they want to fly straight to Aqaba and go to Petra as soon as they reach Jordan," Susan Bauer, the manager of a tour agency in Germany said.

"In fact, people have cancelled their trips to Jordan when they were unable to go straight to Petra and stay there at least two nights," she added.

To counteract the anticipated shortage in accommodations in Petra, the Forum Hotel there is expanding its size by adding 65 rooms, to be completed by October 1991.

Mr. Atallah, however, insists that tourists should spend more time in the north of Amman because there is more in Jordan than Petra.

"Petra is the jewel in the necklace of tourism in Jordan, and we want to polish the necklace holding that jewel," Mr. Atallah said.

Royal Jordanian airlines gave the group brochures on Jordan, Saturday, before the airline flew them home.

Council discusses agricultural policies

AMMAN (J.T.) — The Higher Agricultural Council held a meeting Saturday to discuss issues pertaining to Jordan's agricultural policies which, among other things, pertain to food production, food security, cereal production and pasture lands.

Ministers of agriculture, water and irrigation, industry and trade, supply and higher education, as well as the Agricultural Committee at the Lower House of Parliament attended the meeting.

According to the Jordan News Agency, Petra, another meeting has been scheduled for next Saturday during which working papers on farming will be reviewed.

The meetings have been called to discuss Jordan's agricultural strategy which was submitted to Parliament by Minister of Agriculture Mohammad Alawneh last month.

The strategy covers matters related to production and consumption of food, agricultural development, exports of produce and other related topics.

Petra said that the council would also focus attention on means of better utilisation of water resources for agricultural purposes, marketing of products in Jordan and abroad, development of the country's livestock wealth and related topics.

The Lower House of Parliament on March 10, heard a general report by Minister of Agriculture Mohammad Alawneh on the agricultural policy in Jordan. He said that the agricultural sector served as a main source of income for 20 per cent of the population and provided jobs to 12 per cent of the total labour force in Jordan.

Mr. Alawneh told the deputies that the country's strategy aimed at achieving food security by meeting local demand, improving farmers' income and ensuring requirements for farming processes.

The strategy, he said, was based on better use of arable land, curtailing construction operations on agricultural land, halting expansion of municipalities' boundaries until the year 2000 and introducing a law defining

the use of land for various purposes and creating incentives for encouraging production.

Mr. Alawneh pointed out to Parliament that only 6,842 square kilometres, of Jordan's total area of 89,206 kilometres, was arable land.

In pursuit of the strategy, it was announced that a meeting would be held at the Ministry of Agriculture, on Monday, to discuss the role of agricultural nurseries for the production of saplings for agriculture.

Mr. Alawneh last week met with managers of private companies, which are carrying out extensive agricultural projects at the Disi and Mudawara areas in the southern regions of the country, to review the problems they were facing in the production of cereals including the soaring prices of agricultural produce.

Commenting after the meeting, the minister noted that the country's total production of wheat, for instance, does not exceed 10 per cent of the country's requirements and stressed the need for better utilisation of the land to increase production.

Sudan says incoming aid should comply with country's, U.N.'s laws

AMMAN (J.T.) — Sudan said Saturday that the door was open for any country or organisation to offer the Sudanese people humanitarian assistance provided that such assistance was given in accordance with the country's laws and under U.N. sponsorship.

A statement issued by the Sudanese Embassy in Amman said that Sudan welcomed any assistance which would help the country overcome the present difficulty and until the emergency conditions have ended.

The statement said that the government had undertaken a programme of planting food on vast areas of land, but a gap in food supplies still existed. "The government of Sudan is determined to produce sufficient food for its people and to market part of the production abroad," the

statement added.

According to the statement, the Sudanese government is pursuing intensive efforts with the world organisations and the United Nations to facilitate the flow of relief supplies to the Sudanese people.

Last Wednesday, the Sudanese government forecast food sufficiency this year and stressed that it was not facing famine, only a "food gap" which would be filled by measures already taken.

Relief officials in Khartoum said earlier that hundreds of thousands of people in southern Sudan, ravaged by nearly eight years of civil war and recurrent food shortages, may perish unless food is rushed to them.

Some 7.5 million in the whole country are believed to be in need

of urgent assistance of 1.2 million tonnes of supplies during 1991, relief officials said.

According to Reuter news agency, a proposed, U.N.-sponsored relief programme for the south, where 250,000 people died of hunger in 1988, was awaiting the government's go-ahead to start.

Sudan, Africa's largest country, consumes about 900,000 tonnes of wheat and 2.4 million tonnes of sorghum a year, according to estimates.

The country's crumbling transport system and chronic fuel shortage have in the past left pockets of hunger even during years of good harvest. The latest statistics put Sudan's population at 25 million people.

7,000 jobs available in building material industry

AMMAN (J.T.) — The Jordanian Union of Construction Materials Manufacturers Saturday announced the availability of 7,000 job vacancies at various factories manufacturing tiles, bricks and stone for building, and invited Jordanians to come forward and take over the jobs made vacant with the departure of a great number of non-Jordanians.

Yousef Huneiti, the union president, said that "now that the national economy is picking up again, these factories are in desperate need of Jordanians to take over the work of 15,000 non-Jordanian labourers who were employed before the Gulf crisis."

"Before the crisis there were 3,000 such factories operating in Jordan and supplying products to the local market and the Arab countries, but during the crisis 1,500 closed down permanently, while the others continued to work at a very reduced level," Mr. Huneiti added.

Before the crisis, Jordan used to export construction material products worth JD 100 million to the Gulf countries, and it is hoped that new markets would be opened for Jordan because the local market can only absorb 25 per cent of the total production, Mr. Huneiti said.

Mr. Huneiti appealed to the Ministry of Industry and Trade to stop issuing licences to more factories to open and noted that many of those that were closed down were sold at a big loss.

Apart from the lack of sufficient number of Jordanians to work in the factories, this industry is facing another problem represented in the extra tax imposed on the cement production and introduced in 1989.

This tax, he said, has increased the cost of operations and it is

hoped that the government would rescind these laws in a bid to boost the factories work.

Mr. Huneiti also demanded that equipment used in the construction materials industry be exempted from customs duty because it forms an integral element in the development process in Jordan.

The Ministry of Labour's Vocational Training Corporation (VTC) had earlier announced programmes to train Jordanians in trades like dressmaking, and producing bricks and other materials used in construction, and training people to work in bakeries.

The Ministry of Labour has been cracking down on foreign labour and recently announced it would only issue permits for jobs which no Jordanian can fill.

In the past week, the Labour Ministry embarked on an intensive campaign to find work for Jordanian drivers. A ministry statement said that as of this month the ministry would not issue permits for foreign workers to drive trucks in Jordan in a bid to find jobs for the Jordanian drivers.

It said that inspection teams would make sure that the new measures are implemented.

According to the Labour Ministry, the country has 996 non-Jordanian drivers employed by private transport companies in Jordan.

Cross-country walk proceeds to benefit MAP

AMMAN (J.T.) — Under the patronage of His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan, the honorary chairman of Jordan Medical Aid for Palestinians (MAP) and Her Royal Highness Princess Sarvath, MAP's sponsored walk shall take place on Friday, May 10, starting at Amra Hotel and ending at Al Rajaha Village on the outskirts of Wadi Sir.

The proceeds will benefit MAP's operations.

Participants include teams representing embassies, universities, schools, professional associations, companies, banks and clubs in addition to families and

individuals.

The walk extends over sixteen kilometres, starting at Amra Hotel, past the Seventh and Eighth Circles, towards Khirbet Sarra, Abu Sous village and ends at Al Rajaha Village which overlooks the Dead Sea, the Jordan Valley and the West Bank.

Tea stations are situated along the route where water and refreshment will be offered to participants.

Buses shall travel along the route to carry participants either to the end point by cars. Prizes shall be awarded to winners.

Police and ambulances shall be available in case of emergency.

Participants may join the special teams representing the different schools, clubs, companies, or otherwise join the "road-runners" team that shall be formed for individuals with previous arrangement with the organisers.

The walk ends at "Khaimat Baladna" where lunch, consisting of traditional foods and sweets, shall be on sale for participants and other visitors that may join at the end point or starting point.

TCC to prosecute faulty subscribers

AMMAN (J.T.) — The Telecommunication Corporation (TCC) has resorted to the law in order to collect dues from subscribers whose telephone services have been permanently terminated, and, according to TCC Deputy Director for Financial Affairs Ahmad Munes, a total of JD 6 million is still to be settled.

Mr. Munes told Radio Jordan Saturday that telephone services to 13,500 subscribers had been terminated permanently following repeated warnings to settle their dues.

Last month, the TCC carried out an intensive campaign to collect its dues from subscribers in Amman and other governorates and said that more than JD 10 million were to be settled.

Mr. Munes said

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Game or self-destruction?

CHAIM WEIZMANN, the "father" of Israel, once had this to say about the Jews: "We're a small people but a great people, an ugly yet a beautiful people; a creative and a destructive people — a people in whom genius and folly are equally co-mingled. We're an impetuous people who have time and again repudiated and wrecked what our ancestors built. For God's sake let us not allow the breach in the wall to swallow us."

Weizmann could have easily directed his sermon to Foreign Minister David Levy and Defence Minister Moshe Arens who were yesterday fighting through the airwaves over what the former reportedly agreed to during his talks with U.S. Secretary of State James Baker.

Levy did not agree to much of what the secretary of state had apparently sought. He did not answer two important questions concerning Palestinian representation and the role of the U.N. in the proposed peace conference on the Middle East. Nor in fact did his prime minister, Yitzhak Shamir, do so. This of course must have prompted the U.S. State Department's spokeswoman to issue her carefully worded statement which said that the burden of making progress towards holding the conference now rested with Israel.

The airwave tussle between the two Israeli ministers could not have been all that serious, considering the basic position that the Israeli cabinet has taken on the Baker mission and ideas. The more likely and logical explanation for it is that it is stage-managed for the obvious benefit of Israel — more precisely the Shamir cabinet — in its dealing with the Americans over the issue of the peace process. The hawkish Israeli housing minister, Ariel Sharon, tried such tactics as used by Arens against Levy before — most recently by bulldozing his way to erect and expand new settlements on the West Bank to put the secretary of state on the spot and further complicate his peace talks while in Israel. In that process Sharon picked a fight with Levy by opening up a front in the ruling Likud Bloc that is directly aimed at undermining the influence the foreign minister has within the central committee of that body.

In the final analysis, Israeli political insiders say, the infighting among the ministerial troika serves no other purpose than to allow the chief strategist of them all, Prime Minister Shamir, to be all things to all men, but especially to the Americans, who may be finally trying to pin him down on how far he is willing to go into the peace process.

It is probable Secretary Baker is becoming more and better aware of the Israeli game and is finding it more difficult to play. If this is the case, he has every right to go even beyond the statement his spokeswoman has made. If, on the other hand, the Israeli leaders are just being self-destructive, as their founding father indicated decades ago, Secretary Baker has a duty to save them from themselves.

In the archives of his department he would find an old advice from an old hand, veteran U.S. Ambassador J. Rives Childs who had these words to say in 1953: "We should announce to the Israelis that they cannot count upon our continued financial support unless they are prepared to entertain and implement some reasonable compromise with the Arabs, including respect for the decisions of the U.N. with regard to Israel. As long as we pour millions into Israel, how can we expect the Israelis to listen to reason? We should say to them very frankly, either you will decide to abide by the decisions of the U.N. and come to terms with the Arabs or you cannot continue to expect our financial aid."

ARABIC PRESS COMMENTARIES

President Bush's expression of optimism over the ongoing efforts to bring peace to the Middle East is not justified simply because Israel has not displayed any intention of recognising the rights of the Palestinian people or a commitment to the implementation of U.N. Security Council resolutions 242 and 338, said Al Ra'i Arabic daily Saturday. So far nothing concrete has come out of the Baker shuttle diplomacy; and a mere agreement on holding negotiations, does not mean progress towards reaching a lasting peace based on justice, said the paper. The only guarantee for the aspired peace, the paper noted, is Israel's commitment to respect the international legitimacy and implement U.N. Security Council resolutions which enable the Palestinian people to regain their national rights in their own homeland. There is a difference between negotiations over the implementation of these resolutions, which should be done; and negotiations over the international legitimacy itself, said the paper. It said that sitting at the negotiating table is not an end by itself, but a means to achieve the end, which is the implementation of Security Council resolutions 242 and 338 which provide for the exchange of land for peace. The paper said that as much as Bush has a right to feel optimistic, the Arabs have the right to learn about the basis for such optimism, and to know whether the United States has gone back on its pledges to implement the international legitimacy or there really is cause for such optimism on the ground that Israel has displayed genuine intention of moving ahead towards peace.

A columnist in Al Ra'i daily believes that among the defeated nations in the Gulf war were Germany and Japan which displayed total subjugation to Washington. Fahd Al Fanek says the war has of course ended with a sweeping defeat for Iraq, with the United States achieving military victory which, he notes, could be turned into a political catastrophe for President Bush should guerrilla warfare start in view of the presence of British and American troops in northern Iraq. The Soviet Union also tasted defeat with the beginning of the dismantling of the Soviet Empire by President Gorbachev while China's defeat started long before that, when it lost a role as a leader of the Third World countries and transformed itself into a supporter of U.S. actions, the writer notes. He says that Germany which was expected to emerge as a major world power has regrettably turned itself into a dwarf, standing favourably to Washington's desires and succumbing to Israel's insults.

Sunday's Economic Pulse

Urgent economic decisions we failed to make

By Dr. Fahed Fanek

Following the end of Gulf War II, the government realised the need for a new futuristic vision to guide the path of Jordan's economy. A ministerial committee was formed to undertake the job. Since then we have not heard anything from or about this committee. There is no indication that the committee has met, or formulated new policies and proposed alternative options.

This transitional period is crucial in the determination of Jordan's economic future for years to come. The foundations are now taking shape for either an economic recovery and take off or another crisis similar to that of 1988.

The government looks almost paralysed. Its formula appears to be "do nothing." It is trying to bury its head in the sand of the Japanese and European financial assistance that Jordan received through the influence of the American administration. The government failed to recognise the creeping problems. It is acting as if the flow of foreign aid will continue at the same level for years to come, which should make it possible to continue subsidising and appeasing everybody and all groups.

The major question that the government was expected to resolve is of course whether adjustment and reforms, interrupted by the Gulf crisis in the summer of 1990, will be resumed without further delay. But there are many other urgent decisions that are not being tackled despite the resulting distortions and direct losses.

The agricultural sector alone consumes around 70 per cent of the limited and scarce water resources. This year we don't even

have the bare minimum to accommodate the normal production at the Jordan Valley. The government's answer to this question is to offer the water at a fraction of its direct cost, thus preventing the rationing of its use as well as losing public funds in the process.

The Jordan Electricity Authority (JEA) is run efficiently yet it is losing millions of Jordanian dinars every year, which are immediately covered by loans under the treasury guarantee. The government's answer to this problem is to lower the price of power produced by JEA and sold to electricity distributing companies, simply because such companies are privately owned would not continue as a losing operation. But that government decision only provided an artificial solution at the expense of higher losses to JEA simply because it is a public sector corporation and the public sector is conditioned to live with deficit and not care about losses.

Fuel conservation is a high priority everywhere. This should be more true in Jordan which imports 99 per cent of its fuel needs. What did the government do towards solving this problem? The answer is obvious. The government lifted austerity measures, maintained its pre-crisis low prices and started to subsidise fuel just as it did in the seventies.

The official economic literature in the economic development plans and the budget presentation addresses claims that rationing consumption and reduction of deficit are top priorities and public sector corporations should be self-sufficient and price their products on sound economic basis. It is astonishing how much the

government isverse in announcing the proper policies that should be followed but equally determined to go in the opposite direction when it comes to application of these policies in practice.

The failure of the government to start a gradual increase in water prices is not only causing waste and distortion in the agricultural production but it is also depriving us from using \$50 million ready for disbursement to finance vital agricultural projects by the World Bank. The funds are withheld until the discrepancy is dealt with.

The government's failure to adjust electricity prices to reflect the actual cost is not only causing a waste of energy but it is also depriving Jordan from utilising another \$50 million ready for disbursement by the world Bank to finance our energy related projects provided we fix the pricing policy of energy.

The failure of the government in working out an updated economic adjustment programme and making the necessary reforms is not only causing more distortions and inviting crisis but also may deprive Jordan from receiving its fair share of foreign development aid which is tied to sound economic policies.

Some observe blame all the economic shortcomings and failures on democracy. This is not true. Democracy and public participation is the best environment to make the difficult decisions and share the responsibilities. For without democracy and freedom of expression the space occupied by this critical essay would be used to praise the government for unfounded achievements.

Ireland to seize chance for peace after 70 years?

By Paul Majendie

Reuter

DUBLIN. — Ireland, a divided island with a history steeped in bloodshed, now faces its best chance of permanent peace in 70 years.

Almost 8,000 people have died in one of the world's longest-running guerrilla conflicts and sectarian hatred is deep in British-ruled Northern Ireland.

But London's Northern Ireland Minister Peter Brooke has achieved the seemingly impossible — getting Protestant and Catholic politicians round a negotiating table.

Brooke will start talks with the province's political parties next Tuesday in a bid to end 17 years of direct rule from London and bring implacable foes together in a local power-sharing government.

The last power-sharing government collapsed in 1974 after just one year with a Protestant-inspired general strike by hardliners in an unholy alliance with Protestant paramilitaries.

Will Brooke succeed? History does not favour unbridled optimism in Northern Ireland. Three of his predecessors failed and the men of violence could still torpedo the best-laid plans of constitutional politicians.

But there is an unmistakable air of optimism on both sides of the border as Brooke prepares to meet unionists representing the one-million-strong Protestant majority and moderate nationalist from the 500,000-strong Catholic minority.

The Irish Times echoed those hopes: "the discussions may prove to be the most significant and far-reaching to have addressed relations between these two islands and between the parties in the north since the 1921 treaty negotiations."

Those negotiations heralded the birth of a nation in bloodshed. The treaty partitioned the island into the independent south and the British-ruled north. It sparked a bitter civil war in the south.

Northern Protestants, enjoying a 2-1 majority in Northern Ireland, have no wish to join a Catholic-dominated country where divorce and abortion are banned. In a united Ireland they would be outnumbered 4-1.

The north's nationalists, who launched a civil rights movement in 1969 for better jobs, housing and education, aspire to national unity but, as a first step, would like the unionists to agree to some form of local power-sharing.

The talks, scheduled to run for 10 weeks, are to have an added dimension with the

Dublin government being brought in to discuss North-South relations and ties between the two islands.

Irish Prime Minister Charles Haughey, a diehard republican who once called British-ruled Northern Ireland "a failed political entity," now says: "The European Community offers us an entirely new context in which to seek political progress in Ireland."

"In trying to chart a new path which will soften and eventually eliminate the divisions of the past on this island, we must intensify our efforts within the framework of a new Europe in which the unity of peoples is the major theme."

All sides will be working to improve and hopefully transcend the landmark 1985 Anglo-Irish agreement that gave Dublin a consultative voice in the daily running of Northern Ireland.

That agreement is loathed by the unionists who saw it as a British betrayal on the road to Irish unity. They are pushing for the Irish republic to drop the claim to Northern Ireland enshrined in its constitution.

That could be up for negotiation, Irish Foreign Minister Gerry Collins conceded last weekend. "We want to be flexible, we want to be understanding," he said.

There are many mountains to climb. Unionist Leader James Molyneaux made that plain: "The union (with Britain) is not up for grabs. The union is not up for auction."

But the biggest problem could be the paramilitary extremists on both sides of the sectarian divide with the province now once more embroiled in a savage cycle of "tit-for-tat" killings.

Protestant extremists have promised to call a ceasefire from the start of the talks next week but nationalist are sceptical and cynical about the leaders' ability to control their men.

The Irish Republican Army, fighting to oust Britain from Northern Ireland, responded by calling a limited and conditional ceasefire.

"Should these death squads become inactive, then the IRA will monitor the situation and act accordingly," said an IRA statement, which added that attacks on security forces would continue.

The country is struggling to recover from the six-week allied bombing offensive in January and February, the lightning ground war that drove Iraqi troops from Kuwait and subsequent rebellions by Shi'ite Muslims and Kurds.

The country's infrastructure has been largely destroyed, either by the allies, the rebels or government forces that crushed the rebellions.

In Baghdad, there is little electricity. Baghdadis are chopping



Iraqis, ravaged by war and rebellion, claw their way back

By Wafa Amr

The Associated Press

BAGHDAD — The Shi'ite Muslim woman, veiled from head to toe in her black chador, pleaded with the merchant for a chocolate bar for her hungry son crying at her side.

The merchant wanted three dinars — about \$6 — for the moldy bar. The woman offered half a dinar — \$1 — "all the money I have."

"Have mercy on me, my child has not eaten chocolate for three months and he won't stop crying. Please, you know what it's like when you have children," the woman wailed.

The merchant ignored her.

In Iraq, war has brought despair, humiliation and hunger. Despondency hangs like an invisible cloud over the capital.

The country is struggling to recover from the six-week allied bombing offensive in January and February, the lightning ground war that drove Iraqi troops from Kuwait and subsequent rebellions by Shi'ite Muslims and Kurds.

The country's infrastructure has been largely destroyed, either by the allies, the rebels or government forces that crushed the rebellions.

In Basra, ravaged in the 1980-88 Iran-Iraq war and now pinched again for the second time in a decade, doctors said hundreds of people have died from malnutrition, dehydration and contaminated food and water.

If those estimates are anywhere

near accurate, more Iraqis are down trees from their once-shady boulevards for fuel.

Water is scarce. Hundreds are said to be dying from drinking contaminated water from the muddy Tigris River that meanders through the capital. Waste is backed up in the ruined sewer system.

Gasoline is nearly impossible to obtain for most Iraqis, except the military and Baath Party officials. The allies estimated they knocked out 75 per cent of Iraq's refining capacity of 700,000 barrels a day.

Government crews are working around the clock to restore production in the bombed oil facilities.

Many Iraqis have lost family and friends. U.S. estimates are that up to 100,000 Iraqi soldiers were killed in the Gulf war. Iraqi officials have said 7,000 civilians were killed in the allied bombing.

No one knows how many people perished in the post-war rebellions. Some estimates put the death toll as high as 10,000.

If those estimates are anywhere near accurate, more Iraqis are

dead.

Women and children use makeshift wheelbarrows with battered plastic containers to draw polluted muddy water from the Shatt Al Arab waterway, the confluence of the Euphrates and Tigris rivers.

Women in the south are suffering tremendously," said Faisal Bakos, a pediatrician at Basra's Al Tahir Hospital. "They're dying and there's nothing much we can do about it."

The allied bombing completely destroyed the bridges in Al

Amarah and Basra so the government food trucks can't get through," said surgeon Mohammad al Hussein, another doctor at the hospital.

"The rebels destroyed, burned or looted what was left in the government warehouses and the hospitals."

Dr. H. Jack Geiger of the City University Medical School in New York, who visited Baghdad for five days earlier this month as President of Physicians for Human Rights, said that seven per cent of the hundreds of children hospitalised with diarrhoea from drinking dirty water are dying because there are no proper facilities any more.

Even in fashionable areas of Baghdad, people cut down palm trees for firewood to cook. They carry the wood and palm fronds on their backs or in hand-pulled carts.

The more fortunate can afford kerosene-run generators to provide electricity for cooking and heating. But finding fuel is a full-time job.

"It's going to get worse," Dr. Geiger said. "They've been living off their reserves and those are about to run out. People are selling their possessions for food and they're at the end of their tether."

"The allied bombing completely destroyed the bridges in Al

Arab troops.

The new defence policy calls

not only for smaller forces,

but also for a switch in focus on



Economic problems push Soviet opinion back to nuclear power

By Ron Popeski
Reuter

MOSCOW — Soviet public opinion, deeply shocked by the consequences of the Chernobyl disaster, is grudgingly coming around to support nuclear power.

As the extent of the country's tailspin sinks in, violent opposition to nuclear stations spawned by the bungled clean-up operation after the April 1986 accident is fading away.

Mass protests become fewer and fewer and local and national authorities quietly review decisions that closed down or halted construction at about a dozen sites throughout the country.

"Chernobyl was a dreadful disaster and mistrust is still great though attitudes to nuclear power are generally improving," said Georgy Kaurov, head of the nuclear public opinion centre responsible for promoting nuclear energy.

"Of course, when a decision is taken to build a power station there is still some resistance. But life has put us in such a position that the energy question has to be addressed."

The anti-nuclear campaign reached a peak last year as the extent of negligence and incompetence after Chernobyl became clear.

Tens of thousands of residents of the Ukraine and Byelorussia who had lived in contaminated areas for four years were at last moved from their homes. Hundreds of thousands of people re-

mained under medical surveillance.

The Ukrainian parliament voted to close Chernobyl and to devise a programme that would eliminate nuclear power.

A high-profile campaign halted construction of a power station in the Crimea — an area of outstanding natural beauty dependent on tourism. Another reactor at Rostov-on-Don virtually ready to go on stream was among those stopped.

But since late last year, with President Mikhail Gorbachev trying to steer the country by decree and anti-crisis measures and consumers unable to buy virtually anything in shops, the mood has shifted.

Kaurov's network of information centres drawing on 12 ministries appears to be swaying public opinion.

Authorities candidly acknowledge past shortcomings and fully report incidents at power stations. Moscow played a major role in setting up two years ago the world association of nuclear operators to exchange international experience.

A shift away from the Chernobyl-type RBMK reactor in favour of smaller pressurised water units commonly used in the West is intended to help win public confidence.

Soviet television campaigns in favour of nuclear power, drawing heavily, though unsoundly, on France as an example of how residents of prosperous villages live happily alongside power sta-

tions.

Even ecological activists admit the campaign has made considerable headway.

"Two years ago, any suggestion we should put the economy first and forget about ecology would have been dismissed out of hand," said Vadim Daumye of the Nascent Soviet Greens Party.

"Now things in the country are so bad that all ecological issues have been pushed off the agenda."

Daumye accuses authorities of exaggerating energy shortages to win back support for their stalled nuclear programme.

The oil industry, the country's largest foreign currency earner through the 1970s and 1980s, is in crisis, with production falling sharply. Coal resources are limited and pollution linked with thermal stations is increasingly blamed for huge environmental problems.

Natural gas, though still plentiful, will start to run out next century. Hydro-electric power, used to great advantage in other countries, is undeveloped and viewed as impractical in a country spanning thousands of kilometres from end to end.

The Kremlin has delayed publication of an energy programme for nearly two years — the 10th draft is due to go before parliament in coming months.

Studies show that unless the current power output of 280 million kilowatts a year is quickly increased shortages will occur early next century.

Planners point to increasing nuclear's 12.5 per cent share of the output. That, they say, means bringing on stream at least seven average-sized reactors within the next five years and a further seven to 12 by the end of the decade.

Since late last year, power shortages have prompted authorities in Voronezh in Southern Russia to authorise construction of two new reactors — despite a 94 per cent vote against nuclear power in a local referendum.

Decisions to proceed with new stations or expand existing ones were taken in Tver, north of Moscow, Magadan in the far east and Chelyabinsk in the Urals.

In Armenia, authorities fearing new energy blockades by neighbouring Azerbaijan are considering reopening a nuclear plant closed after the disastrous 1988 earthquake.



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Baker puts onus on Israel

(Continued from page 1)
direct talks between the Jewish state and the Arabs.

Ms. Turwiler refused to say whether Baker had made any demands on the Arabs, especially Syria, or whether he had accepted proposals put forward by Israeli Foreign Minister David Levy, as Israeli officials claimed.

She said the questions Israel still had to answer involved operational details of a peace conference, such as how long it would run and whether the United Nations should play a role.

The Israeli officials said that in talks with Mr. Baker on Friday Foreign Minister David Levy agreed to five points on the format of the peace conference.

Mr. Arens, a rival with Mr. Levy for leadership of the rightist Likud, said: "I was not at the meeting with the foreign minister, but I presume that final agreement will have to be accepted by the cabinet."

"From the point of view of reaching an Israeli position, in the end this must be agreed on with the prime minister, and as you know, Baker's discussion with the prime minister did not finish and no conclusion was reached," he told Israel radio.

Foreign ministry officials said Mr. Baker and Mr. Levy did not discuss two key issues that could torpedo the U.S. effort — a role for the United Nations and the composition of a Palestinian delegation to a peace conference.

Israel opposes roles for the United Nations and Palestinians from Arab Jerusalem.

The officials said Israel accepted Soviet co-sponsorship of a peace conference if Moscow restored ties with the Jewish State, and Israel would consider giving Europe a role which has yet to be specified.

They also said that on the assumption the conference would have no authority to impose decisions, Israel would "favourably consider" letting it

U.S. begins refugee airlift

(Continued from page 1)

United States clearance to send aid and the first of the U.S. air force plane landed in Tehran Saturday with blankets for the refugees.

It will be only the second time an American plane has been permitted into Iran since 1979, when 52 U.S. diplomats were seized and held captive by revolutionaries for 444 days.

Several American transport planes and helicopters took part in a botched hostage rescue effort

reconvene with Israeli and Arab agreement to hear progress reports on bilateral negotiations.

Israel had previously said it wanted a ceremonial opening to the regional conference which would then break up into direct talks between it and Arab states.

Mr. Levy's slight concession provoked criticism from Mr. Arens and right-wing parties in Mr. Shamir's coalition who fear Israel might be dragged into an international conference which would force it to give up occupied Arab territories.

"It started as a one-time event with the participation of the United States and the Soviet Union," Mr. Arens said.

"Today they want to change the name from a meeting to a conference. Today they want to add European representatives to this conference. Today they want to add an observer from the United Nations to this conference. Today they want our agreement that this meeting will be convened again and it is no longer a one-time event."

"Thus it seems to me that the distance is diminishing between what is proposed here and a full international conference to which we will not go under any circumstances," he said.

Mr. Arens also said he favoured speaking with elected Palestinian representatives, as proposed in a moribund 1989 Israeli plan, rather than appointed delegates as envisaged at a regional peace conference.

He said that for the sake of policy coordination it would be better for Israeli leaders to meet Mr. Baker together rather than separately as they have done on each of Mr. Baker's four visits since early March.

During Mr. Baker's second Middle East peace mission Mr. Levy announced that Israel and the United States had reached broad understanding on an Arab-Israeli peace conference. Talks with Mr. Shamir later that day revealed many obstacles remained.

Mr. Arens Saturday appeared to

turn the tables on Mr. Levy, who has adopted a more conciliatory approach to peace efforts since replacing Mr. Arens as foreign minister last June.

In the previous government, Mr. Arens was the one who tried to coax Mr. Shamir into talks with Palestinians while Mr. Levy worked to undermine the process by pushing hardline Israeli demands.

Hardline Science Minister Yuval Neeman said he was concerned by media reports of new accords with Mr. Baker but would wait to hear from Mr. Shamir and Mr. Levy in the cabinet before deciding what action his ultra-right-wing Tehiya party would take.

"If indeed things are as reported, I think it will be hard for Tehiya to stay in the government," he told army radio.

Tehiya, fiercely opposed to trading land for peace with Arabs, controls three parliamentary seats in Mr. Shamir's 66-seat coalition. Tehiya's central committee is to meet this week to discuss the peace efforts.

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France wants big power talks

(Continued from page 1)

general said that the two U.N. convoy teams "will also discuss modalities for the take-over, in due course, of the camps presently being set up by American, British and French forces in northern Iraq."

On that basis, he said, a plan of action will be prepared for his approval and immediate implementation will follow.

He said the latest figure of displaced persons is 1.02 million in Iran, 416,000 just inside Turkey at the border with Iraq and 200,000 to 400,000 refugees on the Iraqi side of the frontier.

In Washington, White House deputy press secretary Roman Popaduk said Mr. Perez de Cuello's comments "underscore the important role the U.N. will be doing in alleviating the suffering of the refugees. We will continue working with the U.N. for the eventual turnover of the future camps."

But President George Bush said U.S. troops would remain in northern Iraq as long as they were needed, which may pose a problem for the U.N. in taking full charge of the camps.

The United States says its presence is covered by Security Council Resolution 688 that demands Iraq allow aid groups to deliver relief to those in need but several senior U.N. officials argue that the resolution did not

authorise troops.

Consequently they say that the United Nations cannot formally take charge of the camps while U.S. and allied troops are on base without another resolution though a gradual U.N. presence is expected.

He said he worked under the impression that Mr. Carter was pressing for their early release to help his campaign.

Mr. Nabavi said the hostages left Iran before Mr. Reagan actually took over the White House.

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Diplomat denies Karrubi made deal

(Continued from page 1)

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Political analysts have said the hostage issue, especially last-minute jockeying that failed on the election eve, helped Mr. Reagan achieve a landslide victory over Mr. Carter.

The hostages were released Jan. 31, 1981, just minutes after Mr. Reagan was sworn in as president. The United States released some Iranian assets in return.

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clear," he said.

The most influential Shiite Muslim cleric in Lebanon, Sheikh Mohammad Hussein Fadlallah, said in remarks published Saturday that the issue of the 13 Westerners missing in Lebanon has "reached an advanced stage of ripeness."

Also Saturday, the leftist Beirut newspaper Al-Safir accused U.S. President George Bush of banning financial aid from wealthy nations to Lebanon pending the release of the Western hostages.

"I believe that this issue has reached an advanced stage of ripeness, but it will not be discussed in Lebanon," Sheikh Fadlallah said in answering an interviewer's question on the issue of the Western hostages.

He said that for the sake of policy coordination it would be better for Israeli leaders to meet Mr. Baker together rather than separately as they have done on each of Mr. Baker's four visits since early March.

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They also said that on the assumption the conference would have no authority to impose decisions, Israel would "favourably consider" letting it

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SPORTS NEWS IN BRIEF

Unpaid Bordeaux players go on strike

BORDEAUX (AP) — Players of the financially troubled Bordeaux Girondins soccer club, unpaid for two months, said Saturday they will no longer take to the field. The first-division club's players voted unanimously to strike beginning Saturday, said a communiqué released by the team. Their next scheduled match comes May 4 against Montpellier, so a week remains to work out a deal. The Girondins, French champions three times in the 1980s, have been hard-hit by scandal and financial troubles this year. The team faces relegation and even liquidation if it cannot re-order its financial house. Since former President Claude Béziers was stripped of the club last year under charges of financial mismanagement, a series of white knights have tried to and failed to grapple with the club's 300 million francs (\$50 million) debt. The latest, Jean-Didier Lange, has been negotiating with the players to lower their salaries. But player anger over back-pay manifested itself Saturday.

Spartak fined for missing matches

MOSCOW (R) — Beaten European Cup soccer semifinalists Spartak Moscow were fined 200,000 roubles for missing two league matches when they went to Japan for a friendly tournament at the end of March. The fine is massive by Soviet standards, but galloping inflation has gradually reduced the value of the rouble to a fraction of the official exchange rate, which stands at \$1.7 to the rouble. It seems unlikely that Spartak, one of the best-supported teams in the land, will be crippled by the fine. The Moscow side attracted crowds of around 100,000 for the home games in the European Cup against Napoli. Real Madrid and Marseille will also have earned valuable hard currency during the tournament in Japan. Spartak, who lost to Marseille in the European Cup Wednesday, are seventh in the first division.

N. Irish call up former coalman

BELFAST (R) — Former Belfast coalman Paul Williams continued his fairytale success story with a call up to the Northern Irish soccer squad to meet the Faroe Islands next week. The 27-year-old striker, recently bought by second division West Bromwich after scoring 17 goals in 25 games for fourth division Stockport, could now make his international debut in the European Championship Group 4 qualifier. But Northern Irish manager Billy Bingham has dropped Celtic defender Anton Rogan, who played in last month's 4-1 defeat by Yugoslavia in Belgrade. Irish League part-timer Stephen McBride is also left out because his club Glenavon play three days later in the Irish Cup Final against Portadown.

Taylor backs decision to axe Waddle

LONDON (R) — England soccer manager Graham Taylor has defended his decision to axe Chris Waddle of Marseille from the squad for next week's European Championship qualifier against Turkey. He has also issued a warning to Liverpool striker John Barnes that his could be the next name on the hit-list. Taylor showed little respect for the big names of football when he dropped Waddle and experienced campaigners such as Bryan Robson and Peter Beardsley for the game against Turkey. But the England manager said: "If you look at Waddle and John Barnes it's the same situation. They have played around 60 games for England and that is quite a lot of matches. We can all talk and say things but at the end of the day you have to do things. I have to produce results and players have got to produce consistent performances whoever they are playing for."

Gascoigne close to joining Lazio

LONDON (AP) — English midfielder Paul Gascoigne is on the verge of signing with Italian soccer club Lazio for a possible world-record fee, British press reports said. But Lazio, which boasted last month that the 23-year-old star would be playing in its colours next season, said the deal was not yet complete. "We'll talk about Gascoigne only at the end of the season," said Lazio's Carlo Regalia. "For now we have nothing to say, and we'd prefer that this business isn't talked about any more." Asked if and when the contract would be signed, he replied: "I really don't know, but certainly not today." British reports said that Tottenham, under pressure from a bank to lower its debt of \$29 million, was set to sell Gascoigne, its biggest asset. The reported fee was \$14.5 million but it could match the \$15 million fee Italy's Juventus paid Fiorentina for Roberto Baggio last year. Tottenham signed Gascoigne, 23, for \$3.4 million in July 1988, transferring him from Newcastle.

China's divers to miss World Cup meet

PEKING (AP) — Women's world diving champion Gao Min of China will miss the World Cup meet opening next week in Canada because of a shoulder injury, the official Xinhua News Agency reported Saturday. Xinhua said Gao, 20, the 1988 Olympic gold medalist in the springboard competition, has decided to skip the meet to continue her recovery and prepare for the 1993 summer games in Barcelona, Spain. The report described the injury as serious, but did not say how it occurred. The Chinese team of divers for the Winnipeg meet also does not include 13-year-old Fu Mingxia, winner of the women's platform event at the Goodwill Games last year and the World Championships earlier this year in Perth, Australia. Fu is not eligible for the World Cup competition because the International Amateur Swimming Federation decided in Perth that divers must be at least 14 years old to compete in sanctioned events.

GOREN BRIDGE

WITH OMAR SHARIF & TANNAH HIRSCH
1990 Tribune Media Services Inc.

FIRST ASSUME. THEN DEDUCE

Both vulnerable. South deals.

NORTH	4 A J 10 5
	7 6
	Q 9 6
WEST	4 K 10 7 2
EAST	4 Q void
	J 9 8 4 2
	K 10 5 3
A K 8 5 2	A K 10 7 4 3
4 void	4 J 9 8 4
SOUTH	4 K 9 8 6 4 2
	A Q
	void
	A Q 6 5 3

The bidding:

South	West	North	East
1 ♠	Pass	3 ♠	Pass
6 ♠	Pass	Pass	Puss

Opening lead: King of ♠

The pot might be right that living in a state of blissful ignorance has its own rewards. However, being wise enough to recognize a problem may exist means you might be able to work out a solution.

North's jump to three spades was a limit raise, showing some 11-12 points and four-card support for opener's suit. Since there was no way to determine accurately the full potential of the hand, we applaud

Maradona held by drug squad, Argentina mourns fallen idol

BUENOS AIRES (R) — Argentine soccer star Diego Maradona was arrested Friday afternoon on suspicion of possessing drugs, shocking the nation which had idolised their rag-to-riches hero.

Police said Maradona, 30, was being held at drug squad headquarters after his arrest with two other men at a flat in a Buenos Aires suburb.

Television interrupted programmes to flash scenes of the stocky midfielder being hustled into a police car. He had been recently banned by the Italian Soccer League from playing anywhere in the world for 15 months after traces of cocaine were found in a urine sample.

Viewers saw their national hero, who had risen from a Buenos Aires slum to become one of the world's highest paid and best known athletes, eyes glazed and head lolling, smiled at onlookers as he left the building supported by another man.

Maradona appeared to be sobering when he arrived at drug squad headquarters, where he is likely to be held over the weekend before bail can be considered.

"I feel sorry for him. He looked awful. He just can't take the pressure," said housewife María García.

"He's an idiot. He's thrown everything to hell," commented José Lorenzo, a waiter in a downtown bar where conversation centred on the man whose genius on the pitch had led Argentina to the 1986 World Cup title but whose personal problems had left his career in tatters.

Legal sources said Maradona faced a prison sentence of one to six years if found guilty of possessing drugs. If convicted of supplying drugs to others, the sentence could be up to 16 years.

Argentine goalkeeper Sergio Goycochea, Maradona's teammate in the 1990 World Cup, said in a television interview: "It's a really ugly situation. Very tough.

We have got to support him because he has done so many good things."

Residents of the apartment block said Maradona and the two men had been at the first floor flat since Thursday afternoon. When drug squad cars pulled up outside they had seen Maradona throw a packet, later recovered by police, from the window.

The judge in charge of the case denied a report by the Argentine News Agency, Telam, that a packet confiscated by police contained half a kilo of cocaine.

The names of the two other men have not been released although Maradona's agent Juan Marco Franchi said he understood they were childhood friends of the 30-year-old star.

Despite his problems in Italy, Maradona is still worshipped in Argentina where fans nurture the hope he will reconsider his decision to abandon international football.

But over the past two years his career went sour. He skipped practices and missed matches.

His name was mentioned in connection with drug and prostitution rings, deepening his feud with Napoli's authorities, who are suing him for damaging the club's image.

When he returned to Argentina from Italy earlier this month with his wife and two daughters, Maradona said he wanted to abandon the game forever because he was fed up with professional soccer.

soccer and return to the national side he captained in 1986 and to second place in the 1990 finals.

Argentine Manager Alfio Basile has repeatedly said the door was always open if Maradona wanted to return to the team.

Since signing with Napoli seven years ago, he helped the club win its first two Italian League championships and one European Football Union Cup.

But over the past two years his career went sour. He skipped practices and missed matches. His name was mentioned in connection with drug and prostitution rings, deepening his feud with Napoli's authorities, who are suing him for damaging the club's image.

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HOROSCOPE

FORECAST FOR SUNDAY APRIL 28, 1991

By Thomas S. Pierson, Astrologer, Carroll Righter Foundation

GENERAL TENDENCIES: The Full Moon in Scorpio and Mercury coming out of retrograde along with the double Moon Square of Jupiter and Saturn ensure that you are the one who listens to what others have to say and who follows their suggestions completely on any project.

LIBRA: (September 23 to October 22) The way you do the projects assigned to you is vitally important to you.

SCORPIO: (October 23 to November 21) This is the time to make sure you do charm others who are in distress for you can relieve their anxieties greatly so avoid any negative ideas.

SAGITTARIUS: (November 22 to December 21) Whatever you have in mind to improve matters at your residence is very good but do nothing today that has others thinking badly of you.

CAPRICORN: (December 22 to January 20) You need to use more than average care on the highway to avoid some potential danger and you would be wise not to get in any problem areas.

AQUARIUS: (January 21 to February 19) This is your time to show you do value the good will and active assistance of whomever you have any material or financial dealings with.

PISCES: (February 20 to March 20) This is your day to avoid the social spotlight and to get your personal affairs in such order they are in fine fettle for the future coming.



Ayrton Senna recorded Saturday by his McLaren team mate Gerhard Berger.

Senna claims record 55th pole at Imola

IMOLA, Italy (R) — World champion Ayrton Senna increased his record number of pole positions to 55 Saturday when wet weather reduced final qualifying for the San Marino Grand Prix to academic interest.

On a day of rain showers and heavy cloud cover, conditions were never ideal for any attempt at improved times following Friday's opening qualifying. Senna was able to secure pole in his McLaren without any extra effort on a damp circuit.

It was his seventh successive pole position at the Autodromo Enzo E Dino Ferrari, but the closeness of his rivals in the qualifying session Friday suggested a close and competitive race.

Senna's Friday time of one minute and 21.877 seconds was 19 seconds quicker than the best

Senna will share the front row of the grid with Riccardo Patrese, who was only one-tenth of a second slower in his Williams, with Alain Prost, in a Ferrari, sharing the second row with Nigel Mansell in the second Williams.

Berger shares the third row with Stefano Modena in a Tyrrell.

Less than seven-tenths of a second separated the best times of the leading five drivers Friday and much could depend on the weather conditions and possible wet-weather set-ups of cars Sunday.

Senna said he was concerned about the conditions for the race and did not expect an easy run against either the Williams or Ferrari teams.

"I just hope the conditions are consistent," he said. "If not then it could be a 'luck' situation and not a technical one. Imola is a very slippery circuit and the visibility is not good down the straight."

With maximum points from his two successive season-opening victories in Phoenix and São Paulo, the 31-year-old Brazilian already has an 11-point lead over Prost in the title race.

Senna will have a new revised Honda V12 engine put into his McLaren for the race. The team believe this could give him a decisive edge in what promises to be a tight duel with Patrese, who will be seeking a repeat of his 1990 victory.

China, Korea win final-round table tennis matches in Chiba

Danish team of Toelhoj and Hansen 21-11, 21-13.

Korea is sending its first unified team to an international sports meet since the Korean peninsula has divided to North and South Korea in 1945.

China led Group A with a 7-0 mark in the preliminary round. Korea headed Group B, also at 7-0.

The top eight teams from each group advanced into the final round.

In other final round matches, Hong Kong blanked New Zealand 3-0, France beat England 3-1 and Hungary beat Germany 3-1.

Korea needed nearly an hour to defeat Denmark. Hong Kong beat Pia Toelhoj 21-16, 21-16, and Hyun Jung-Hwa beat Pia Hansen 21-19, 21-9. Hyun then joined Li Bun-Hui to beat the

Becker moves to Monte Carlo final

MONTE CARLO (AP) — Boris Becker advanced to the third clay court final of his career with a semifinal victory over Yugoslavia's Goran Prpic, 6-3, 6-3 Saturday in the \$1-million Monte Carlo Open Tennis Tournament.

Spain's Sergi Bruguera was to play Austria's Horst Skoff in the second semifinal later Saturday.

Becker has never won a professional tournament on clay. He lost to Alberto Mancini of Argentina in Monte Carlo two years ago and bowed to Juan Aguilera of Spain in Hamburg, Germany last year.

Becker started using the same tactic that helped beat defending champion Andrei Chesnokov Friday.

On the very first point of the match, Becker used a backhand drop shot that Prpic just got to. Becker put away an easy winner to the open court.

Although Prpic won the game, Becker used the same manoeuvre twice to gain a break and go up, 2-1.

Although Prpic came to even the set at 3-3, Becker took the next three games, helped by Prpic errors, including four in the final game of the set.

The second set was, at first, identical. Becker again went up an early break only to be tied at 3-3.

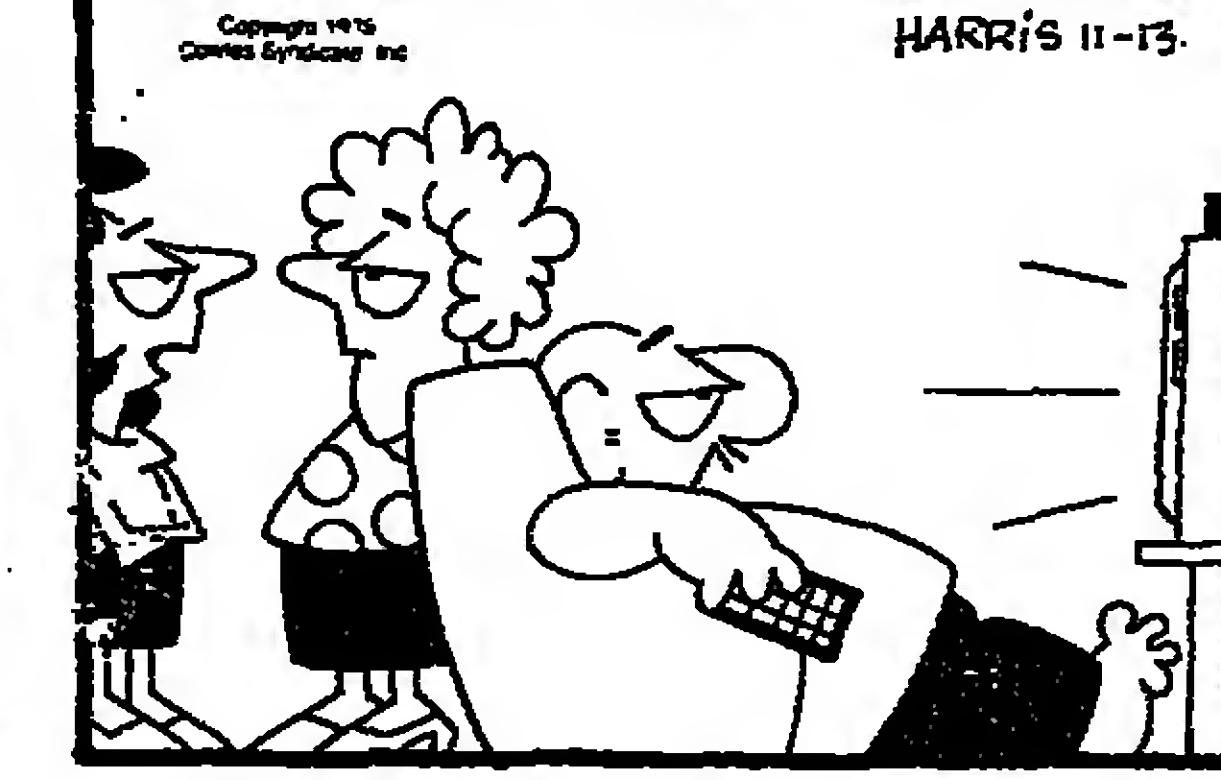
But this time the deciding game was the eighth. Becker scored four consecutive points on Prpic's serve — two winning approach shots and two Prpic errors.

That put Becker up 5-3. He served for the match and won it on a brilliant running forehand passing shot.

"It was a continuation of yesterday," Becker said. "I played very good from the very first point on."

THE BETTER HALF

By Harris



"Living...that's one of the little things he does to annoy me."

JUMBLE

THAT SCRABLED WORD GAME by Henri Arnold and Bob Lee

Unscramble these four Jumbles, one letter to each square, to form four ordinary words.

PARVO

RIMPE

NESING

SLIZZE

Print answer here:

(Answers tomorrow)

Yesterday's Jumbles: PAGAN FLOOR DEPUTY WEDGED

Answer: What you can usually count on in a pinch — THE PADDY WAGON

THE Daily Crossword

by Evelyn Bensohof

ACROSS

1. Darning (4)

5. Fresh-water fish (4)

9. Hospital division (4)

13. Korean e.g. (4)

<p

Gorbachev blasts hardliners, prepares to confront strikers

MOSCOW (AP) — Mikhail Gorbachev is condemning Communist Party hardliners after defeating their attempt to force him out of the party's top job, reports said Saturday. But he also promises firm action to halt strikes and protests.

In a speech Friday to the party's Central Committee, the Soviet president said the party risks becoming politically isolated, and he called his hardline attackers "irresponsible" in their attempt a day earlier to oust him as party general-secretary.

He warned of the danger that "party organisations will occupy themselves exclusively with the settlement of internal party problems, and will remain... outside the main developments" of politics, the party daily Pravda reported Saturday.

He urged the Communist elite to "concentrate on helping the party show its ability as an active force in the implementation of the anti-crisis programmes," according to Pravda.

Gorbachev's continuing fury hinted of a break with the hardliners. So did the "anti-crisis" plan for salvaging the Soviet Union that he hammered out this week with the leaders of nine of the 15 republics, who want more power now held by the party and the central government.

The plan calls for rewriting the constitution, holding new elections, selling off small state-owned companies, speeding up creation of stock exchanges, and puts a moratorium on strikes and rallies.

Gorbachev promised firm action as soon as next week to halt strikes and restore plummeting production in basic industries and consumer goods.

Interior Minister Boris Pugo said in an interview Friday that

Gorbachev planned to impose a "special regime" involving economic measures, not troops, to restore sliding production. He would not elaborate.

On Friday evening, thousands of police and unarmed Interior Ministry troops closed off the centre of Moscow surrounding the Kremlin, in preparation for the May Day parade Wednesday and possible anti-government demonstrations. Dozens of water cannon and military vehicles were parked outside one end of the Kremlin.

Last May Day, tens of thousands of citizens poured into Red Square at the end of the official parade and shouted "resign" at Gorbachev and other leaders.

Gorbachev told the Soviet Supreme legislature Friday that the Central Committee "thought it was their duty to say... 'what are you sitting there for? we'll show you'... So they could go back to their local organisations and say, 'we beat the hell out of him'."

With slurred words and bags under his eyes, he explained that he lost his temper during the two-day party meeting and said he could not continue working with such a Central Committee, and suggested he resign.

"Then, they began thinking about what was happening," he said, turning slightly red and nearly shouting. The Central Committee voted 322-13 Thursday to support him, and Soviet newspapers Friday emphasised he had outmaneuvered his hardline opponents.

To hardliners who want to reinstate the Communist monopoly on power, Gorbachev said, "society would not accept that," according to a TASS transcript.

Gorbachev received support Friday from the usually critical

legislature of Russia, headed by his rival, Boris Yeltsin. The law makers backed the plan Gorbachev negotiated Tuesday with Yeltsin and the leaders of the eight other republics that wish to remain united.

In Byelorussia, tens of thousands of striking workers went back to their factories, and others abandoned their blockade of a railway that had prompted the deployment of feared "black beret" riot troops.

Strike leaders said they were suspending the walkout until a May 21 legislative session because they feared authorities were trying to provoke violence as an excuse for imposing martial law, the independent Interfax News Agency said.

Striking coal miners in the Voronezh region in the far north agreed to go back to work after authorities met their demand for transfer of all the area's mines from the Kremlin's to the Russian Republic's control, Interfax reported.

Hundreds of thousands of other striking coal miners, however, did not back off their demands for higher wages, more power for the republics and Gorbachev's resignation.

The plan approved by the nine republics commits all sides to quick signing of a new union treaty, a new constitution six months after that, followed by new elections for the president and parliament.

The nine republics are the Russian Federation, the Ukraine, Byelorussia, Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan, Azerbaijan, Tadzhikistan, Kirgizia and Turkmenistan.

The six not included are Armenia, Georgia, Moldavia, and the three Baltic republics of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania.

De Klerk rejects ANC attack over prison releases

JOHANNESBURG (R) — South African President F.W. De Klerk dismissed as propaganda African National Congress (ANC) allegations that he was delaying key reforms.

Speaking Saturday on his return from a tour of Britain, Denmark and Ireland, De Klerk said their governments showed understanding of the "tremendous complexities" he faced in trying to dismantle apartheid.

There was a realisation that ultimatums by Nelson Mandela's anti-apartheid movement demanding key reforms by April 30 and May 9 were confrontational and should be avoided," he said.

"The propaganda effort to create an image as if we are not performing in terms of our agreement is really without a factual basis," De Klerk told an air port news conference.

The ANC has threatened to pull out of power-sharing talks with De Klerk and consider resuming its suspended armed struggle unless political prisoners are freed and the return of exiles arranged by April 30 under an ANC-government agreement.

The ANC has set a second deadline of May 9 for another set of demands to be met, including the ending of township warning and the dismissal of Law and Order Minister Adriaan Vlok and Defence Minister Magnus Malan.

Violence in black townships mainly between the ANC and the rival Inkatha Freedom Party has killed at least 600 people so far this year.

"We are absolutely on schedule with regard to question of political prisoners and with regard to the question of exiles," De Klerk said.

De Klerk said that on his tour, aimed at further easing South Africa's international isolation, he found a "realisation that confrontational ultimatums should be avoided."

"Note has been taken of the commission (investigating violence) which we intend to establish and the (multiparty) conference on silence which we have called for May 24."

De Klerk says less than 200 political prisoners remain in jail but the ANC, the largest black opposition group, says hundreds more are in captivity.

It says anti-ANC bias in the government bureaucracy is slowing the return of exiles. Up to 40,000 South Africans are in exile but only several hundred have returned.

Justice Minister Lee Jong-Nam told parliament, meanwhile, that there would be a full investigation into the killing of Kang Kyung-Dae, 20, during a clash with police at Seoul's Myungji University Friday.

The prosecutor's office also said that four riot police were arrested in connection with the incident, and the district police chief, Cho Moon-Yong, had been fired. Later, the four confessed to beating the student, the office added.

In Seoul, riot police fired tear gas and water cannons to drive back about 3,000 students trying to March out of Yonsei University to demand the resignation of cabinet ministers over the death.

Some students hurled firebombs and rocks to try to stop the police action, but the main group remained peaceful.

"Let's disclose the brutality of police by staging peaceful protests," shouted student leaders.

Protests were held in at least two other cities, and radicals and dissidents vowed to stage week-long, nationwide protests condemning the killing and demanding the overthrow of the government.

In the provincial city of Kwangju, 300 students were driven back from a police station by police firing blank shots, news reports said. The other protest was in the central city of Taejon, reports said.

In parliament, Prime Minister Ro Jai-Bong said "The death occurred because some police used excessive violence." He said the cabinet would work swiftly to get the facts in the case and to prevent another such tragedy.

Home Minister Ahn Eung-Mo, who is in charge of police and security operations, was unable to testify in parliament because opposition politicians screamed and yelled, demanding that he leave the podium, news reports said.

About 35 groups, including three opposition parties and the nation's leading dissident organisations, held a news conference and denounced the death of the student, calling it a murder.

"The death is not an accident, but a systematic murder committed by the Korean government of President Roh Tae-Woo," they said in a statement.

The trip is Kaifu's first to each of the nations and his first meeting with the current leaders of Malaysia, Thailand and Singapore, a Foreign Ministry official said earlier this week.

Rocard visit is further sign of improved ties with N. Zealand

WELLINGTON, New Zealand (AP) — French Premier Michel Rocard arrives Monday for a three-day visit to New Zealand aimed at mending relations strained by the Rainbow Warrior sinking nearly six years ago.

It is the first visit to the South Pacific nation by a top French official since French secret service agents sank the Rainbow warrior, the flagship of the environmental group Greenpeace, in Auckland Harbour on July 10, 1985. Greenpeace photographer Fernando Pereira drowned.

"This visit signifies the end of a period of tensions since the Rainbow Warrior," a source close to Rocard said in Paris. "The premier will sign a friendship treaty that will put this episode behind us once and for all."

New Zealand Prime Minister Jim Bolger hopes Rocard's visit will lay the foundation for a new and constructive relationship.

The two countries continue to disagree over nuclear policy, but Bolger said they also have much in common: Shared interests in the South Pacific and Antarctica, environmental and trade matters.

"It will be very useful to discuss not only the many areas in which we can work together, but also those where we have differing views," Bolger said last week.

Discussions will centre allow-



Michel Rocard

ing French territories and departments like New Caledonia and Polynesia to participate more fully in South Pacific regional affairs.

France also would like to open a privileged trade relationship with New Zealand that would allow the South Pacific nation greater access to the international arena, the French source said.

Neither side expects any major position shifts on the issue of French nuclear testing.

"We don't ask that the New Zealanders accept our nuclear testing, but we hope we can do other things with them, especially environmental work on Antarctica and the whales," the French source said.

New Zealand, population 3.5 million, has been a world leader in the anti-nuclear movement.

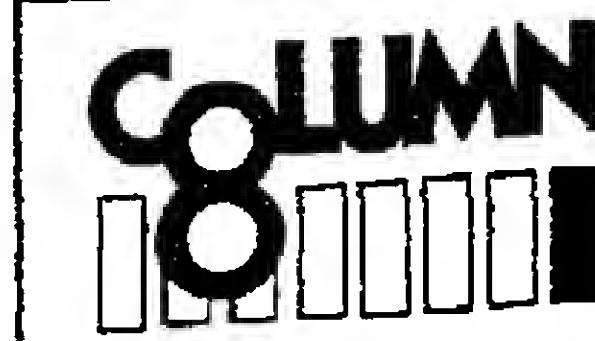
The year before the Rainbow Warrior incident, the Labour Party government of then-Prime Minister David Lange initiated a no-nuclear policy that led to estrangement with the United States. U.S. warships have been prevented from making port calls because the Defence Department refuses to divulge whether they carry nuclear weapons.

Since Bolger became prime minister in the National Party's election loss last October, New Zealand has been trying to foster better relations with both Paris and Washington, although Bolger says the no-nuclear policy will remain.

The Rainbow Warrior, a converted trawler, had been preparing to lead a protest fleet to the French nuclear test site at Mururoa Atoll in French Polynesia when two explosions ripped holes in its hull.

The incident sparked a wave of outrage at France, which already had been under strong criticism for its nuclear testing programme.

French agents Maj. Alain Mafart and Capt. Dominique Prieur were arrested and sentenced to 10 years in prison after pleading guilty to manslaughter.



Kangaroo testicles — a tasty little gourmet dish

SYDNEY (R) — Lightly sautéed kangaroo testicles are proving popular among women patrons of the old Willow's Brewery Restaurant in South Australia. "When they first find out what they are a woman finds she can eat them, but a man squirms a bit," chef Wendy Brown told Reuters by telephone from the restaurant at Pichi Richi Pass, about 270 kilometres north of Adelaide. Flinders Ranges Fancies, or kangaroo testicles, are reasonably priced at three Australian dollars (\$2.30) for a plate of three. It's a tasty little gourmet dish — just lightly pan-fried so you still have the nice flavour," said Brown. The peculiarly Australian dish has the texture of an oyster and is an acquired taste, she said. "I tried them the second time and I think I would probably not try them the third time." Brown said she got the idea of serving kangaroo testicles after reading about Rocky Mountain oysters, or sheep testicles, in the United States.

China to send panda pair to 1992 Olympics

PEKING (AP) — China plans to loan a pair of giant pandas to Spain for the opening of the 1992 summer Olympics in Barcelona, an official report said. The mayor of Barcelona wrote to China last year asking for the pandas to "make the ceremony more colourful," the China Daily said. The two pandas will be on exhibit for three months at the Barcelona Zoo, which will be celebrating its 100th anniversary next year. The report did not say if Spain would pay for the use of the pandas. Zoo in the United States, Belgium, Australia and Japan have paid \$300,000 to \$500,000 to borrow pandas pairs for temporary exhibition. China's practice of loaning out its rare pandas, which face extinction in the wild, has come under fire. Pandas are native only to central and southwest China, and only about 1,100 pandas exist in the wild, down from 2,000 in 1977. In 1988, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service suspended issuance of import licenses that the transport of pandas because of objections from American conservationists that the transport of pandas exploited them for profit and interrupted efforts to breed them in China.

He said there was no word on what the rescue teams had discovered under the thick jungle canopy but added that Alvarado's fears were shared by many officials here.

The banks of the Teliere River where many of the Bribri, Cabecar, Barbilla and Coche Indians were living when the quake hit, said Ulises Quezada, a spokesman for the Costa Rican Red Cross.

He said there was no word on what the rescue teams had discovered under the thick jungle canopy but added that Alvarado's fears were shared by many officials here.

One person died when a tornado across the field," he said. "A barn disappeared and it tore the devil out of the house."

A sheriff's official in Sedgewick County, which includes Wichita, estimated that up to 200 people were taken to hospitals.

Kansas lawmakers were

3 hurt in Basque separatist attack

city, said police.

The attack came as the soldiers and their relatives were gathered in an open area for a ceremony pledging allegiance to the flag, said a police spokesman who declined identification.

No group immediately claimed responsibility.

But the spokesman said the attack appeared to be the work of the Basque separatist organisation ETA, which seeks independence.

Fate of thousands of Indians are unknown after Costa Rica quake

SAN JOSE, Costa Rica (Agence France Presse) — Suspected Basque separatists fired on soldiers and their relatives as they prepared for a military ceremony.

The attack came as the soldiers and their relatives were gathered in an open area for a ceremony pledging allegiance to the flag, said a police spokesman who declined identification.

No group immediately claimed responsibility.

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The banks of the Teliere River where many of the Bribri, Cabecar, Barbilla and Coche Indians were living when the quake hit, said Ulises Quezada, a spokesman for the Costa Rican Red Cross.

He said there was no word on what the rescue teams had discovered under the thick jungle canopy but added that Alvarado's fears were shared by many officials here.

Oklahoma authorities blamed tornadoes for at least three deaths in the northeastern part of that state.

One person died when a tornado hit a street corner in Copan, in northeastern Oklahoma near the Kansas border, where cars were rolled up like little balls," said Bartlesville shift chief Larry Topping.

Tornadoes also hit Nebraska and Louisiana.

climax this autumn, when the Security Council will make its choice and present it to the General Assembly for approval.

In practice, the five permanent Security Council members with veto power — the United States, Soviet Union, China, Britain and France — agree upon a mutually acceptable candidate to present to the General Assembly.

At least 26 candidates, both famous and obscure, have emerged from all corners of the world as possible successors to Perez de Cuellar, a Peruvian.

Some potential candidates, such as former Soviet Foreign Minister Edward Shevardnadze and British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher, are considered long-shots because the five permanent Security Council members have traditionally blocked nominees from their own ranks.

"It is a practice that the five permanent members have never provided a secretary-general, and I would be very surprised if that is broken," Hannay said.

Others who are considered more likely possibilities include:

— Retired Nigerian Gen. Olusegun Obasanjo, a former president.

— Maurice Strong, a Canadian multimillionaire now organising a U.N. conference on the environment.

— Olara Otunnu, a former Ugandan U.N. ambassador.

— Ali Alatas, the foreign minister of Indonesia who has been deeply involved in seeking a diplomatic solution to Cambodia's civil war.

— Gro Harlem Brundtland, prime minister of Norway.

— Thorvald Stoltenberg, foreign minister of Norway and former U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees.

— Martti Ahtisaari, a U.N. undersecretary-general from Finland who was the top U.N. official overseeing Namibia's transition to independence.

— Prince Sadruddin Aga Khan, who is in charge of coordinating the U.N.'s relief programme in the Gulf and is a former U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees.

— Tommy Koh, Singapore's former ambassador to Washington and the United Nations.

— Oscar Arias Sanchez, the Nobel Peace Prize winner and former Costa Rican president who devised the Central American peace plan.

— Maurice Strong, a Canadian multimillionaire now organising a U